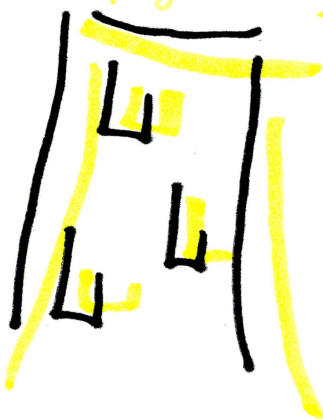
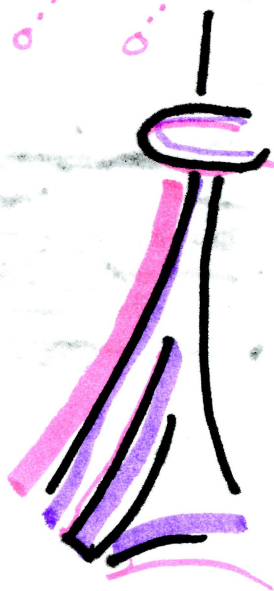


2015

Here We
Come!



RYERSON UNIVERSITY

A HUMUMENT

(Altered Book)

by

ENGLISH BA

CLASS OF 2015

August 16, 2011

Jonathan Culler

LITERARY THEORY

A Very Short Introduction

ENG 108 The Nature of Narrative I

Life

Inconceivable

we ask

Where

narrative

giving

experience

foundational

on

students

fictional forms

history of periods and media in order to

under

storytelling

goals

strategies and rhetorical effect

Terms may include

novels, poetry, and drama as well

in

texts

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

RYERSON UNIVERSITY

Katrina
Whitnell

Daniel
Gomez

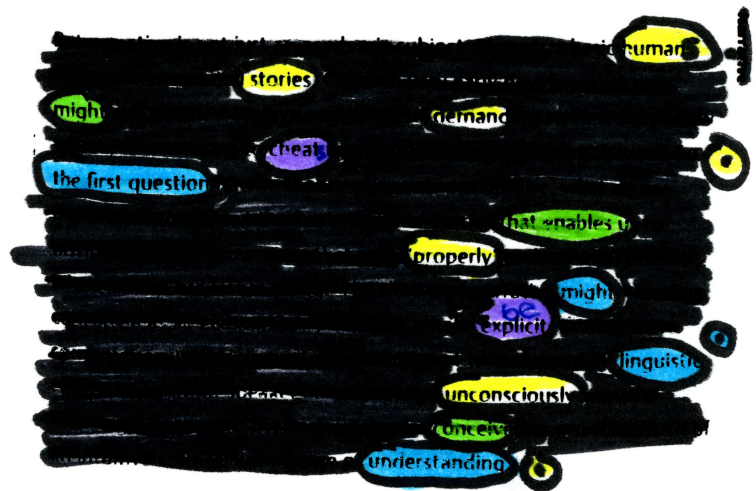
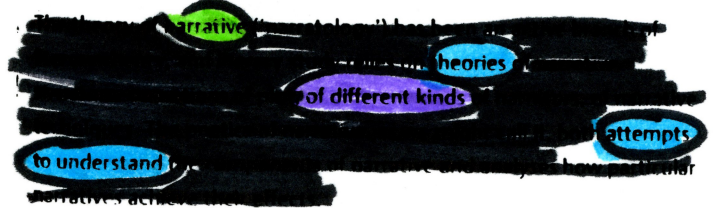
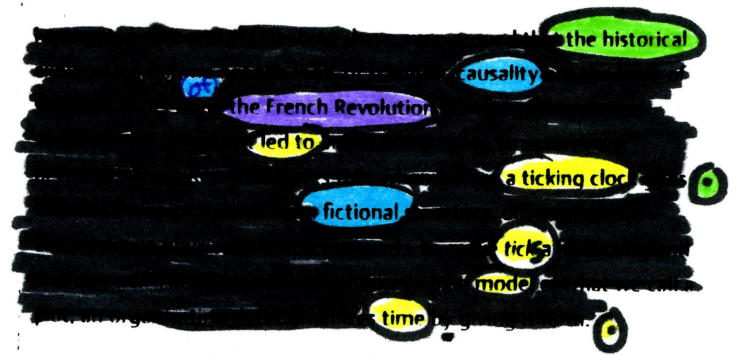
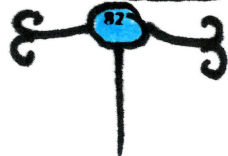
Narrative by Dylan Day and Phoenix Simms

Simms
OK

Once upon a time literature meant above all poetry. The novel was a modern upstart, too close to biography or chronicle to be genuinely literary, a popular form that could not aspire to the high callings of lyric and epic poetry. But in the twentieth century the novel has eclipsed poetry, both as what writers write and what readers read and, since the 1960s, narrative has come to dominate literary education as well. People still study poetry, often, it is required, but novels and short stories have become the core of the curriculum.

This is not just a result of the preference of mass readership, who happily pick up stories but seldom read poems. Literary and cultural theory have increasingly claimed cultural centrality for narrative. Stories, the argument goes, are the main way we make sense of things, whether in thinking of our lives as a progression leading somewhere or in telling ourselves what is happening in the world. Scientific explanation makes sense of things by placing them under laws: whenever *a* and *b* obtains, *c* will occur, but life is generally not like that. It follows not scientific logic of cause and effect but the logic of story, where to understand is to conceive of how one thing leads to another, how something might have come about, how Maggie ended up selling software in Singapore, how George's father came to give him a name.

We make sense of events through possible stories: philosophy of human beings.



P3

Daniella Armstrong
and
Amy Driedger.

What are the elemental requirements of a story? Aristotle says that plot is the most basic feature of narrative, that good stories must have a beginning, middle, and end, and that they give pleasure because of the rhythm of their ordering. But what creates the impression that a particular series of events has this shape? Theorists have proposed various accounts. Essentially, though, a plot requires a transformation. There must be an initial situation, a change involving some sort of reversal, and a resolution that seals the change as significant. Some theories emphasize types of parallelism that produce satisfactory plots, such as the move from one relationship between characters to its opposite or from a fear or prediction to its realization or its inversion; from a problem to its solution, or from a false accusation or misrepresentation to its rectification. In each case we find the association of a development on the level of events with a transformation on the level of theme. A mere sequence of events does not make a story. There must be an end relating back to the beginning - according to some theorists, an *ex tunc* indicates what has happened to the desire that led to the events the story narrates.

narrative. If this is the case, then narrative competence is most for all of readers' ability to identify plots. Readers can tell that two works are versions of the same story; they can summarize plots and discuss the adequacy of a plot's summary. It's not that they will always agree, but disagreements are likely to reveal considerable shared understanding. The theory of narrative postulates the existence of a level of structure - what we generally call plot - independent of any particular language or representational medium. Much poetry, which gets lost in translation, plot can be preserved in translation. Comics, like language, or any medium into another's silent film or a comic strip can have the same plot as the story.

~~We discover, though, that there are two ways of thinking about plot.~~

to make.

From this angle, plot is a way of shaping events to make them into genuine story. Writers and readers have events into a plot in their attempts to make sense of things. From this angle, plot is what gets shaped by narratives as they present their experience in different ways. So, sequence of acts by three characters can be shaped by writer and readers into a plot that stands out as heterosexual love, whereas young man seeks to escape from his woman, they desire resisted, systematic opposition, series of twists of events, all these things have to come together to form plot of one character as he is presented in narrative from the given point of the suffering, erotic, and sexually liberating man, as an external observer, puzzled by these character or an omniscient narrator, who is the character's innermost feelings, grows to a further growing distance from these goings on. From this angle, the plot of a story is the given and the discourse is the varied presentations of it.

The two are

The next level I have been discussing events, plot (function) and its pure function is the opposition between events and plot and between story and discourse.

Narrative

events/plot

story/discourse

Plot or story is the material that is presented in a certain point of view by the writer (different versions of the same story). But the plot itself is a shaping of events. A plot can make a wedding the happy ending of a story, the beginning of a story, or even occur in the middle. What readers actually encounter though is the discovery of what the plot is something that comes from the text, and the idea of a plot is a construct of the reader. We talk about events as an inference or construction of the reader. We talk about events that have happened in a plot, but we highlight the meaningfulness and organization of the plot.

8

By: Madison Maher
Lynbert fernandes

Danilo P. Alessandro R:



Mr. Sun, sun, Mr. golden
Sun

Presentation

The basic distinction of the theory of narrative is between plot and presentation, story and discourse. The terminology varies (and is often confused). Confronted with a text that includes many and other representations, the reader makes sense of it by identifying the story (seeing the text as one particular presentation of that story; by identifying what happens we are able to think of the verbal material as the way of portraying what takes place. Then we can ask what type of presentation has been chosen and what difference that makes. These variables are crucial to narratives' effects. Much narrative theory explores different ways of conceiving these variables. Here are some key questions that identify meaningful variation.

Who speaks? A convention of narrative is said to have a narrator who may stand outside the story or be a character within it. Theists distinguish first person narrators where a narrator says 'I' (though somewhat confusingly called 'third person narration' where there is no 'I') and third person narrators as a character in the story. All the characters are referred to in the third person, by name, as 'he' or 'she'. First person narrators may be the main protagonists of the story, or they may be participants in the story, or they may be observers of the story, whose role is to describe things to us. First person observers may be fully developed as individuals with a name, story, and personality, or they may not be developed at all and quickly fade from sight as the narrative goes under way, affacing themselves after introducing the story.

Who speaks to whom? The author creates a text which is read by readers. Readers hear from the text a voice which speaks to them. The narrator addresses listeners who are sometimes explicitly constructed, sometimes explicitly identified (especially in stories within stories) where one character becomes the narrator of the inner story.

Shelly

Geraltine

other characters. The narrator's position is often called the narrative voice. Whether or not the narrator is explicitly identified, the narrative implicitly constructs an audience to whom the narration takes for granted and what it explains. The narrator's voice is often implicitly constructed to imply an audience that recognizes certain references and shares certain assumptions. That a modern reader may not share feminist concerns has been especially interested in the way that American literature frequently positions male readers to the texts implicitly addressed to them who share a masculine view.

When does the story take place? The time at which events occur (as distinct from the time at which the narrative is told) is often called the story time. The time at which the narrative is told is often called the narrative time. Telling may immediately follow the events, as in epistolary novels (written in the form of letters, e.g. Richardson's *Pamela*), or it may be delayed, as in the case of the narrator who looks back on the entire sequence.

Who speaks what language? Narrative voices may have their own distinctive language, which they use to tell the story. They may also report the language of others. A narrative that tells things through the mouth of a child, for example, uses a language that is appropriate to the child's age and level of understanding. Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of the novel as a dialogic rather than a monologic (single voice) form is central to the essence of the novel. Different voices or discourses and their clash are central to the novel's perspective.

Who speaks with what attitude? The narrator's attitude towards the story and the characters is often explicitly constructed. The narrator's attitude is often implicitly constructed. The narrator's attitude is often implicitly constructed. The narrator's attitude is often implicitly constructed.

Alan
"Ok guy, I guess"
Richardson

Elijah
Kazlauskas

wonder what she really **was** and how **clever**. We suspect that
well, **think** **sometimes** **unreliable** when they provide enough information
about situations and clues about their own biases to make us doubt
their interpretation of events, as when we find a note pinned to the
the narrator shares the **self-conscious** of the author. The narrator speaks of
self-conscious and when narrator discurs the fact that they are
telling a story, **hesitate** about how to tell it, even flaunt the fact that
they can determine how the story will turn out. **Self-conscious** narrative
highlights the problem of narrative authority.

Focalization

who sees? Discussions of narrative frequently speak of the "point of view" from which a story is told, but this use of point of view confuses two separate questions: **who speaks?** and **whose vision is presented?** Henry James's novel *Maisie* employs a narrator who is **a child**, but represents the story from the adult consciousness of the child **Maisie**. Maisie is not the narrator; she is a character in the third person, as "she", but the developments of the story are her perspective. Maisie does not **fully understand** the nature of her relations with the adults. The novel thus has a tension developed by the theories of **Mikhail Bakhtin** and **Genette**, fictionalized through the consciousness or position through which events are brought to focus: **the question: who speaks?** and **is** **question of** **who sees?** These two perspectives on the events brought into focus and presented: the focalizer may not be the same as the narrator. **variables here.**

Temporal Narrativity focalize events from **time** at which they occurred, **shortly afterward**, or **long afterward**. It may focus on what the focalizer saw at **the time** of the event or some time later, with the benefit of hindsight. In recounting something that **happened to her** as a child, a narrator, familiar the

445

88

Everthing **the consciousness** of the mind she was restricting the
 account to what she thought and felt at the time or the **may** realize
 what she had been going and understanding at a later or
 former. Or, of course, she may combine these perspectives
 between what she knew or felt then and what she recognizes now.
 When a person narrates a life story, she is going through a process
 of selecting and organizing her memories. **Accounting now things** what
seemed to be the character at the time or how they are perceived later. The
 choice of temporal focalization makes **an enormous** difference in the
 narrative **effect**. In selective stories, for instance, **account** based on
 focalizer and **each moment** of the past. The narrator's knowledge of the events and the events

Distance and speed
proceeding slowly
telling us
when
to speed
in frequency
happened
could not happen
what regularly happened.

Limitations of knowledge: The narrative may localize the story through very limited descriptions of place or time. It will present actions without giving characters thoughts or feelings. Events can occur depending on the degree of understanding. Descriptions imply: Thus, the old man in a cigarette seems localized through observation with human activities. Human with whitish hairs on the top of his head, and smoke began to rise from the tube attached to his body seems localized through a space and/or person who seems spaced out.

89
Hannah
Levors.

29

Leafy greens

the innermost thoughts
and hidden motives of the characters:
still not satisfied:
in principle no limitations
not only in traditional tales
in modern novels

primarily through consciousness
first person narration
and in third person narration
can result from limitations
When we gain a sense
the events as
story-readers would

Library Theory
These and other variations
determine
the feelings and hidden motivations of protagonists,
displaying knowledge
may highlight, for
example, what people intend
'Little did he know that two hours later he would be run over.'
A story told
point of view of a single protagonist
unpredictability
everything that occurs
may be a surprise
heightened by the embedding of stories within other stories
the act of telling a story
become a principal concern
Stories within stories

90

What's in it for me?

Thenarists also discuss the function of stories. In Chapter 2
that 'narrative display texts' a class which includes both literary
narratives and stories people tell one another, because their
stories are tellable, 'worth it'. Story-tellers are always working off the
potential question: 'So what?' But what makes a story 'worth it'? What
do stories do?

First, they give pleasure. Aristotle tells us through their
imitation of life and their rhythm. The narrative patterning that
produces a twist, as when the biter is bitten or the tables are turned,
gives pleasure in itself, and many narrators have essentially this
function: to amuse listeners by giving a new twist to familiar situations.

The pleasure of narrative is linked to desire. Plots tell of desire and what
befalls it, but the movement of narrative itself is driven by desire in the
form of 'epistemophilia', a desire to know. We want to discover secrets,
to know the end, to find the truth. If what drives narrative is the
'masculine' urge to mastery, the desire to unveil the truth (the 'naked
truth'), then what of the knowledge that narrative offers is to satisfy
that wish? Is that knowledge itself an effect of desire? Thenarists ask such
questions about the link between desire, stories, and knowledge.

For stories also have the function of teaching us about the world, showing us how it works, enabling us
through the devices of focalization to see things from other vantage
points, and to understand other motives that are generally opaque to us. The novelist E. M. Forster argues that in offering the possibility of
perfect knowledge of others, novels compensate for our dimness about
others in 'real' life. Characters in novels

are people whose secret lives are visible or might be visible. We see
people who are invisible. And that is why novels, even when

91

1.12.21

East End
Story Machine
collective

They **wicked people** a **human race** **illusion** and **power**.

Through **the knowledge** **police** **show** **adjusted** **crushed** **social reality** **Many** **story** **lay down** **scenarios** **and** **suggest** **our identity** **rather than** **action** **they** **believe** **in love**.

as **powerful** **social norm** But **social criticism** **expose the hollowness of** **the world** **its** **failure** **predicaments** **and** **the oppressed**.

Finally **the** **theory** **of narrative is this:** **narrative a fundamental form of knowledge** **(giving knowledge of the world through)** **sense-making** **is a rhetorical** **source** **of knowledge** **is** **desire** **would** **avoid** **fictional narratives** **effects are delusory**.

We **need** **knowledge of the world**.

is independent **knowledge more** **what narrative** **there is** **illusion** **as an answer** **back and forth** **the illusion of perspicacity** **principal** **disposal** **exposure** **rhetoric** **the structure** **we emerge** **wise** **disillusioned but chastened** **the secret** **the story goes**.

team
haven



Narcolepsy strikes again!

Team
haven

Jonathan Culler

LITERARY THEORY

A Very Short Introduction

ENG 108 The Nature of Nar

life without stories? Inconceivable

from "narrative" steps in giving

introduce students to fictional

examine the underlying technical

strategies and rhetorical effects

cinematic and digital texts.

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

RYERSON UNIVERSITY

RYERSON UNIVERSITY

A HUMUMENT

(Altered Book)

by

ENGLISH BA

CLASS OF 2015

August 16, 2011

ative I
ble. The moment we ask "Who am I?" or "Where did I come
shaps identity and experience. This foundational course
orms a series of historical periods and media in order to
storytelling, narratives, goals, inner structures.
Texts may include stories, novels, poetry and drama as well as

2

RA